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Public accusations that producer Harvey Weinstein sexually assaulted numerous women triggered a cascade of similar accusations against other powerful men (Farrow, 2017). In the year that followed this public shift toward reporting sexual harassment, over 200 men lost their jobs and faced legal action (Carlsen, Salam, Miller, Lu, Ngu, Patel, & Wichteroct, 2018). This stands out as a unique moment in history. Women chronically endure sexual harassment in the workplace, yet often choose not to confront their harasser because they fear social and economic backlash (Fitzgerald, Swan, & Fischer, 1995). However, when women acted in solidarity, reporting their harassers as part of the #MeToo movement, they showed that confronting discrimination can produce social change. What factors influence people's decisions to confront or ignore bias in its various forms (e.g., sexism, racism, heterosexism)? What are the motives and consequences of confrontation? How can confrontation be approached individually, through education and empowerment, and in specific contexts such as health care?

Especially since the early 2000s, research examining issues related to the confrontation of other's stereotyping and prejudice has grown rapidly, which is evident in the extensive literature featured in this volume. The most traditional way of conceptualizing and investigating confrontation involves one individual challenging (or, when people decide not to confront, failing to challenge) the biased comment or behavior of another individual. However, confrontation occurs and has been studied at other levels as well. For instance, scientists have examined group-level phenomena, such as disadvantaged groups uniting (or not) to confront injustice, and, more broadly, confrontation that occurs through education and empowerment, and through social movements. Readers will see these different levels of analysis represented across the chapters in this volume as the authors explore factors that influence the decision to confront bias, motives and consequences of confrontation,
and how confrontation may be most successfully used in various contexts to promote positive change in people’s minds and behaviors.

The first confrontation research of which we are aware of was reported by Citron, Chein, and Harding (1950). At a time when expressions of prejudice were often both unconcealed and unencumbered by impenitence, Citron et al.’s research was motivated by their observation, “A very large number of people are frustrated because they do not know what to do when confronted by a real-life bigot” (p. 100). Thus the goal of this research was to identify what would be considered acceptable responses to outright bigotry. Participants were audience members gathered together to provide their “opinions about a play.” During this play, an actor made bigoted statements, another person replied by relying on one of the several different types of arguments that also varied according to their tone, and participants reported the acceptability of each message type. Based on their findings, Citron et al. recommended that people respond to bigots by emphasizing the “American tradition,” including fair play and different races and creeds coming together, and by using a calm, “low emotion” presentation style. Such a reaction to bigotry would, Citron et al. argued, be perceived as most acceptable by others. Although the question of how bigoted individuals actually reacted to such confrontations and whether their behavior changed was not addressed, Citron et al. reasoned that the perceived acceptability of the messages would be related to their effectiveness.

Nearly 50 years passed before researchers returned to the study of confrontation. Two developments in the study of stereotyping and prejudice were related to this renewed and subsequently more sustained interest in confrontation. First, around the year 2000, there was an uptick in stereotyping and prejudice research that was “from the target’s perspective” (Swim & Stangor, 1998). This research approach involved considering the experiences and perspectives of targets of bias, rather than conducting research solely from the perspective of majority group members (Shelton, 2000). Taking this perspective, researchers examined how targets react to instances of bias directed at them, and some reactions involved confrontation. For instance, Swim and Hyers (1999) investigated how women reacted when a man made several sexist remarks. They found that a majority of women did not confront the sexist comments, and those who did confront were unlikely to do so directly. In contrast, when women imagined themselves encountering the sexist remarks in the experimental situation, most women said they would confront, and many indicated they would do so directly. Along similar lines, Woodzicka and LaFrance (2001) found that women who were in an interview situation who were asked sexually harassing questions experienced fear, and direct confrontation was rare. However, women who imagined themselves in this interview situation were more likely to say they would feel anger than fear, and a majority of the women indicated that they would directly confront the interviewer. Other research from the target’s perspective suggested that discrepancies between wanting to confront and failing to do so can be linked to target group members’ fears that they will be perceived as complainers and hypersensitive if they do speak up to confront bias (Stangor et al., 2003). Privately, targets may attribute their treatment to bias, but public claims of discrimination are often avoided to escape being labeled as a complainer (Kaiser & Miller, 2001; Stangor, Swim, Van Allen, & Sechrist, 2002).
The second development in the study of stereotyping and prejudice that spurred confrontation research was investigations of the self-confrontation of bias. Arising from the increased recognition of subtle, implicit intergroup biases that the social cognition approach inspired (Monteith, Woodcock, & Gulker, 2013), this line of work started with Devine’s (1989) seminal research that likened prejudice reduction to the “breaking of a bad habit.” Devine argued that people could be truly committed to egalitarian values but still rely on well-learned, automatically activated stereotypic and prejudiced associations when responding. Therefore, Devine argued that people must learn to replace their biased responses resulting from automatic processing with less biased responses—made possible with more deliberate, controlled processing—just as people do when breaking other bad habits. Building from this research, Devine et al. demonstrated that people who believed they should respond without bias but who recognized that they would respond with bias (e.g., White people responding toward Black people) experience feelings of guilt and disappointment with themselves (e.g., Devine, Monteith, Zuwerink, & Elliot, 1991; Monteith & Mark, 2005). In other words, awareness of prejudice-related discrepancies gives rise to negative self-directed affect. Moreover, when self-confrontation occurs (i.e., people recognize their prejudice-related discrepancies), negative self-directed affect and a variety of other motivational and learning mechanisms are triggered that facilitate the inhibition and replacement of biased responses in the future (e.g., Burns, Monteith, & Parker, 2017; Monteith, 1993).

Self-confrontation findings were encouraging, but this strategy for bias reduction had significant limitations. First, people cannot engage in self-confrontation and then regulate and replace biased responses unless they become aware of the subtle and nonconscious ways in which societal stereotypes and automatic prejudices may shape their feelings, thoughts, and behaviors. Such awareness and regulation sometimes arise through people’s lived experiences (Monteith, Mark, & Ashburn-Nardo, 2010), but oftentimes people lack introspective access to their mental processes and their consequences (Nisbett & Wilson, 1977). Without this access, self-confrontation cannot occur. Second, if people are not personally motivated to respond in nonprejudiced ways, even if they recognize their biases, they will often be unlikely to regulate them (Monteith, 1993).

Given these limitations, confrontation by other people, rather than the self, was conceptualized as serving two functions (see Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Czopp, Monteith, & Mark, 2006). First, among individuals who hold egalitarian, nonprejudiced personal standards for responding, another person’s confrontation of their biased responses may instigate self-regulatory processes. Consider, for example, a White college freshman raised in a small Midwestern farming town who had little to no experience with people who are unlike herself aside from the media. Although endorsing nonprejudice and egalitarian values in principle, this student may not realize that some of her assumptions about people are based on stereotypes. When others confront her assumptions, her ignorance can be replaced with efforts to avoid stereotypical assumptions in the future. Confrontation by others can also be extremely useful for raising awareness of biases when they originate from automatically activated stereotypes or evaluations and would escape conscious
awareness if not pointed out by someone else. For example, someone may refer to an unfamiliar doctor as "he," and a confronter may point out that the doctor may not be male. This experience can help the confrontee to recognize the potential for and to avoid similarly gender-biased language in the future. But can we assume that others will have more insight into our biases than we do ourselves? Surely an "outsider" can sometimes spot biases that are not apparent to the self; moreover, as there are many "others" but only one self, the chances of spotting bias are no doubt greater with the help of others.

Second, confrontations can make egalitarian, nonprejudiced norms salient so that, even when prejudiced individuals initially say or do obviously prejudiced things, they will be less likely to repeat their biased expressions after confrontation. Both descriptive (what people are doing) and proscriptive (what people should do) social norms are powerful determinants of behavior (Cialdini, Kallgren, & Reno, 1991), and even people who harbor intergroup animosity can be encouraged to suppress their biases when social norms dictate that they do so (Crandall & Eshleman, 2003). This function of confrontation was what Citron et al. (1950) had in mind when conducting their early research. These researchers construed confrontation as a way to influence the bigot's behavior directly, without an expectation of corresponding attitudinal change. However, we now recognize that, when social norms are consistently maintained, people can come to internalize them as their own values and attitudes (Crandall, Eshleman, & O'Brien, 2002; Kelman, 1958) so that confrontation may ultimately also influence people's personal attitudes.

In sum, the study of confrontation by others arose from the empirical zeitgeist created when (1) researchers began to focus on the target's perspective and (2) the social cognition approach spurred the study of biases with largely nonconscious origins and how they might be reduced. However, empirical zeitgeists are rarely the sole influence on research agendas; just as important are the salient "historical circumstances" beyond science laboratories. As Duckitt (2010) argued, "Important historical circumstances may make fundamentally new and different questions about the nature of prejudice salient, while obscuring others" (p. 30). We doubt that a focus on the target's perspective would have developed without the research of women and minorities who entered psychology and championed scientific investigations from the target's perspective. We also doubt that a focus on reducing subtle and sometimes nonconscious biases would have occurred without the societal reduction in overt expressions of prejudice observed across the 1970s and 1980s in the United States (see Dovidio & Gaertner, 1986). Moreover, confrontation of prejudice in the real-world circumstances has always been a central force in shaping forms of bias and, in turn, scientists' empirical focus. Consider the 1960s Civil Rights activism in the United States such as bus boycotts, protest rallies, sit-ins, and marches that served to confront the prevailing prejudice of the times. Contemporarily, consider confrontations that surround the #MeToo and BlackLivesMatter movements, the Women's March on Washington, as well as individual efforts to stand up to bias and the encouragement of others to do so. The voices and actions of courageous confronters make the scientific study of confrontation as a mechanism for bias reduction possible.
The current volume

In this volume, authors were asked to report what psychological research reveals about confrontation. Contributors synthesize research on (1) the decision to confront bias, (2) the motivations for and consequences of confrontation, and (3) approaches to confrontation in specific contexts. Coverage of these topics largely reflects the current state of knowledge regarding confrontation. We asked contributors to focus on published research, though a few chapters include work in progress. Given the practical importance of understanding how to navigate this phenomenon, we also asked that each chapter end with an Application section that offers practical suggestions for confrontation.

Part I: Decisions to Confront Bias

Part I of this volume addresses the factors that affect one’s decision to confront bias versus remain silent. People often imagine they will say or do something when they witness or experience discrimination, yet more often than not research shows that they do nothing. Kerry Kawakami, Francine Karmali, and Elysia Vaccarino (Chapter 1: Confronting intergroup bias: Predicted and actual responses to racism and sexism) begin by reviewing what we know about how people imagine they will respond to perceived bias. In comparing anticipated responses to actual behavior, they show that people nearly always overestimate how much they will be emotionally affected by and respond to bias. They argue that people may mispredict their likelihood of confronting if they overestimate the impact of that single event on their life, if they harbor implicit biases against the target group, or if descriptive social norms show that others are remaining silent. When people imagine they will confront but actually remain silent, they may hold an undeserved egalitarian self-view which may reduce their motivation to address personal biases and change their behavior. They conclude by recommending strategies to align egalitarian expectations with action, including reducing apathy and changing social norms to support interpersonal confrontation.

Leslie Ashburn-Nardo and M. Fazuan Abdul Karim (Chapter 2: The CPR model: Decisions involved in confronting prejudiced responses) further explain why we commonly find a divide between predicted and actual responses. Even well-intentioned individuals may not confront bias if they fail to clear one of the five hurdles outlined in the Confronting Prejudiced Responses (CPR) model. They present evidence that supports the need to recognize the behavior as prejudiced, perceive it as an emergency that requires an immediate response, feel personal responsibility for intervening, decide on a course of action, and see the benefits of confronting as outweighing the costs before people will confront prejudice. In doing so, they note potential differences between how targets and allies may move through the model. When relevant, they analyze how power differentials affect the process and highlight the implications of the CPR model for perceiving and responding to bias in a workplace context. The authors conclude by considering
how interventions may be designed to help people overcome the hurdles to confronting prejudice.

Chapter 3, The decision to act: Factors that predict women’s and men’s decisions to confront sexism, provides a more fine-grained analysis of decisions to confront sexism. Jessica J. Good, Julie A. Woodzicka, Kimberly A. Bourne, and Corinne A. Moss-Racusin argue that sexism may be uniquely difficult to detect and confront because the nature of ambivalent sexism means that people often treat some women positively and other women negatively. Benevolent sexism rewards women who occupy traditional gender roles whereas hostile sexism sanctions nontraditional women. The insidious nature of ambivalent sexism affects each stage of the CPR model covered in Chapter 2, The CPR model: Decisions involved in confronting prejudiced responses. The authors map the research on identifying and responding to sexism to the hurdles one may encounter when deciding whether to confront sexism. They pay special attention to how the costs and benefits of confronting sexism may inform women’s decisions to confront. They also review research on the effectiveness of target versus ally confrontations, showing how men who are allies may both help and hinder efforts to reduce sexism. This chapter concludes with strategies to increase confrontations of sexism, including placing an emphasis on the potential benefits of challenging biased attitudes and behavior and recruiting allies to support the effort.

Thomas C. Ball and Nyla R. Branscombe (Chapter 4: When do groups with a victimized past feel solidarity with other victimized groups?) further underscore the importance of developing allies to work in solidarity with targets to confront injustice. They note that allies may be recruited from three sources: fellow ingroup members, advantaged outgroup members, and disadvantaged outgroup members. Due to their shared history of oppression, minority group members often expect members of other minority groups to be allies in their efforts to confront discrimination against their group. A sense of interminority solidarity develops when an outgroup embraces another minority’s struggle as their own. Doing so can motivate confrontation on behalf of that outgroup. Yet interminority solidarity is not as common as one might hope. The authors identify factors that affect the likelihood that disadvantaged group members will feel solidarity and assist each other’s efforts to confront injustice. Specifically, they argue that benefit finding and perceived similarity promote, whereas distinctiveness threat and adversarial relations inhibit, interminority solidarity. They focus on how people may utilize these factors to create social policies and coalitions that challenge discrimination in the application section.

Part II: Motives and Consequences of Confrontation

Part II of this volume addresses how personal and situational motives, along with a consideration of the consequences of one’s actions, affect the likelihood of confrontation. Targets of discrimination must often contend with their motivation to be liked versus respected when deciding how they will respond to a perpetrator. Robyn K. Mallett and Kala J. Melchiori (Chapter 5: Goals drive responses to perceived discrimination) propose a model to explain how situational goals direct the target’s
response and shape immediate outcomes with regards to acceptance, mental and physical health, and perpetrator attitude and behavior change. The model links liking and respect goals to decisions to ignore (e.g., avoid the topic or perpetrator, repair the relationship) or challenge (e.g., confront, report the perpetrator) the perpetrator. Ignoring the behavior may satisfy the motivation to be liked and protect the target’s sense of acceptance, but it likely perpetuates bias. In contrast, although challenging the perpetrator may satisfy the motivation for respect, bolster mental, and physical health, and potentially reduce the perpetrator’s prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory behavior, doing so often threatens one’s sense of acceptance. The authors address factors that may cause respect or liking to take priority and offer suggestions for how organizations may use this model to inform workplace policies that minimize negative outcomes for targets.

A person’s lay beliefs, or mindset, about the malleability of bias also affects their willingness to confront bias. Aneeta Rattan (Chapter 6: How lay theories (or mindsets) shape the confrontation of prejudice) reviews research on the concept of mindsets and explains why beliefs about malleability influence decisions to ignore or challenge overt bias. Such beliefs shape the way that people understand, interpret, and respond during everyday interpersonal interactions. Research shows that believing that others do not change reduces willingness to call out biased behavior because people believe that doing so may not be worth the effort—especially given what we know about the potential for social backlash. In comparison, believing that others can change increases willingness to engage in challenging conversations about bias because people expect that doing so may reduce biased attitudes and behavior. The belief that others can change their biased attitudes and behavior also affects perceptions of the perpetrator and the target’s feeling of belonging and satisfaction in the context where the bias occurred. Rattan presents evidence that believing people can change creates a more positive outlook, including greater belonging and workplace satisfaction, but only when minorities and women choose to confront.

Chapter 7, Personal, collective, and group-distancing motives underlying confrontation of prejudice, explores personal and collective motivations that inform one’s decision to confront or ignore bias. Until recently, researchers believed that personal and collective motivations for confronting prejudice were incompatible. Christia S. Brown and Ilyssa Salomon argue that people may reject discrimination against the self (e.g., as an individual woman) or their social group (e.g., women as a group). Alternatively, they may explicitly accept the group stereotype while trying to distance themselves from the target group (e.g., show how they are not a typical woman). Thus the same act of confronting discrimination could be spurred by three very different motivations. Each motivation may have unique consequences for confrontation. Confrontations driven by individual and group motivations both aim to reduce discrimination (against the self or social group, respectively). However, confrontations that are driven by the desire to distance oneself from the group may protect the individual but likely damage the group’s reputation. They conclude by discussing the idea that although confrontation often has the potential to disrupt discrimination, some forms of confrontation may also uphold the societal status quo.
Adolescents commonly experience and witness gendered harassment from their peers, yet they rarely confront the harassers. Christia S. Brown and Ilyssa Salomon (Chapter 8: Adolescents’ responses to gendered harassment and discrimination: Effective strategies within a school context) begin by detailing nature of gendered harassment in schools, including sexual harassment (e.g., unwanted physical contact) and harassment based on gender expression (e.g., homophobic name calling). In doing so, they emphasize the important role that social norms have in shaping ideas of what constitutes acceptable behavior for adolescents. The authors review the research on how adolescents typically respond when they are the target of peer gendered harassment, which include ignoring, confronting, and seeking social support. They document the consequences of peer gendered harassment for adolescents, noting that because girls and boys experience different forms of gendered harassment they also experience different consequences. Several factors affect adolescents’ decision to confront or ignore the harassment, including individual (e.g., a sense of social responsibility, the ability to engage in perspective taking) and group (e.g., gender, socioeconomic status) characteristics. At times, the fear of negative consequences, including physical and social retaliation, may outweigh the perceived benefits of confrontation. The application section puts forth several recommendations for best practices to ensure a safe and welcoming school environment.

Every person has multiple, intersecting identities that shape their experiences of and responses to discrimination. Yet the majority of existing research on confrontation focuses on how people perceive and respond to discrimination against a single social identity. Jessica D. Remedios and Muna Akhtar (Chapter 9: Intersectional approaches to the study of confronting prejudice) take an intersectional approach to studying confrontation that considers how any single stigmatized identity exists in relation to that person’s other stigmatized and nonstigmatized identities. They argue that taking an intersectional approach to understanding confrontation may produce research that is more generalizable and better able to capture the nuances of people’s lived experience than we typically obtain with traditional methods. Using the frameworks of double jeopardy, ethnic prominence, and intersectional invisibility, they generate hypotheses about who is likely to confront prejudice, what types of prejudice people are likely to confront, and how confrontations are perceived by others. Taking this approach allows us to understand that people with certain intersectional identities (e.g., women of color) may face different social penalties for confronting single versus compound forms of discrimination. Moreover, women of color may hesitate to confront discrimination especially when the fear of backlash is compounded by the uncertainty of determining which identity is targeted in an ambiguous situation. They conclude by urging policy makers to expand definitions of discrimination to acknowledge that not all discrimination is experienced in the same manner.

Alexander M. Czopp (Chapter 10: The consequences of confronting prejudice) concludes this section of the volume by summarizing what psychological research has to say about what happens when one person confronts another person for biased behavior. This includes a review of the methods that are typically used by people who research confrontation. Confrontations have an impact on the confronter, the
person who is confronted, and bystanders in the situation. The consequences for affect, cognition, and behavior occur both intrapersonally (i.e., internally for each party) and interpersonally (i.e., between each party involved in the confrontation). Some consequences are negative (e.g., being disliked for confrontation) while other consequences are positive (e.g., less biased attitudes and behavior). There are also consequences for failing to confront bias. When people choose to remain silent in the face of biased behavior, they are safe from interpersonal consequences such as social backlash but face a host of intrapersonal consequences including decreased autonomy and well-being. Moreover, ignoring discrimination conveys acceptance of the behavior and may reduce the strength of egalitarian norms. Czopp argues that making would-be confronters aware of the potential benefits of confrontation, as well as the negative impact of ignoring bias, may allow them to make more informed decisions about whether to confront.

**Part III: Approaches to Confrontation in Context**

The final section of this volume applies what we know about confrontation to several meaningful contexts including confronting during interpersonal encounters, using confrontation in educational and health-care settings, and using the internet as a platform for confrontation.

As noted earlier, people are often unsure about how to respond to expressions of bias. The uncertainty of what to say or how to say it may prevent people from saying anything at all. Margo J. Monteith, Mason D. Burns, and Laura L. Hildebrand (Chapter 11: Navigating successful confrontations: What should I say and how should I say it?) provide suggestions for navigating the potentially perilous road to confrontation. They suggest that confrontations may be more successful if people increase bias literacy and learn strategies to challenge biased attitudes and behavior. The likelihood of success may also be increased if people are optimistic and mentally prepared to act during a confrontable moment. To be effective during the confrontation and minimize the potential for backlash, this chapter also includes suggestions for what to avoid and approach during confrontations. The authors note that who does the confronting and the type of bias that is challenged likely shape the outcome of the interaction. The chapter includes many examples of language that people can use when standing up to bias, providing a tutorial on the “dos” and “don’ts” of confrontation.

William T. L. Cox and Patricia G. Devine (Chapter 12: The prejudice habit-breaking intervention: An empowerment-based confrontation approach) present an alternative approach to interpersonal confrontation in the form of an empowerment-based confrontation intervention. This prejudice habit-breaking intervention minimizes feelings of defensiveness and helplessness in the perpetrator and instead focuses on education and providing tools to create long-term reductions in the expression of bias. Intended for people who value egalitarianism, the intervention starts by introducing the concept of unintentional bias and educating people about the subtle yet powerful consequences of bias in a way that minimizes defensiveness. It then provides a realistic model of change and teaches strategies to reduce bias in
a way that reduces helplessness and increases self-efficacy. Drawing from the prejudice habit model and the adult learning literature, this approach emphasizes that breaking the prejudice habit is attainable and sustainable for people who are willing to put in the required effort. Importantly, people report higher levels of self-efficacy to address bias and taking more actions to address bias postintervention. The authors provide evidence that this approach creates both individual and institutional change by increasing awareness of and concern about bias, which subsequently creates a more inclusive climate.

Chapter 13, Addressing bias in healthcare: Confrontation as a tool for bias reduction and patient and provider self-advocacy. Katherine Wolsiefer and Jeff Stone review evidence that health-care professionals (e.g., doctors, nurses, staff) hold implicit biases that may affect the quality of provider—patient interactions and contribute to group-based health disparities. They argue that confronting bias perpetrated by health-care providers is a form of patient self-advocacy that may empower patients as well as reduce bias in providers. If confrontation empowers stigmatized patients, they may also increase control over how they are perceived and treated by health-care providers. At times, health-care providers may wish to confront biased patients who refuse care based on their group membership. Currently, providers are encouraged to avoid expressing bias to patients and remain silent when experiencing bias from patients. The authors suggest that successful confrontations in this context should first affirm the offending party to reduce defensiveness and increase receptiveness to the confrontation message. Ideally, to reduce bias in health-care providers the authors suggest using the prejudice habit-breaking intervention described by William T. L. Cox and Patricia G. Devine (Chapter 12). Recommendations for training and education for health-care providers are included in the application section.

Nearly all of the existing research on confrontation considers how the phenomenon occurs with adults. However, children commonly experience and enact biased behavior. Intervening at an early age may establish egalitarian social norms and make confronting a routine behavior. There are several challenges involved in teaching children to confront bias. Rebecca S. Bigler and Erin Pahlke (Chapter 14: “I disagree! Sexism is silly to me!” Teaching children to recognize and confront gender biases) note that because children often personally endorse bias, the first step is to teach them to identify bias and label it as problematic. The authors review the consequences that gender stereotyping has for children, including negative effects on information processing, academic and occupational interests, and the development of the self-concept related to academics, sports, and appearance. Interventions that model counterstereotypic behavior and provide antibias messages have had limited success in attempting to reduce children’s bias and increase interpersonal confrontation. With the aim of identifying novel ways to reduce bias and increase confrontation, the authors use developmental intergroup theory to outline key factors that cause children to develop stereotypes and prejudice. They conclude by recommending ways that researchers may intervene and prepare children to understand, reject, and confront sexism.
The final chapter in this book discusses the potential for people to use the internet as a platform to confront individual and societal bias. Eric M. Gomez and Cheryl R. Kaiser (Chapter 15: From pixels to protest: Using the internet to confront bias at the societal level) note that online activism includes both interpersonal confrontation (e.g., of sexist individuals or public figures) and noninterpersonal confrontation (e.g., changing one’s profile picture to show support for a cause, tweeting #BlackLivesMatter or #MeToo). Both forms of confrontation may motivate others to action, inspiring a social movement. Although the Internet offers a promising new frontier for confrontation, it has limitations. The authors argue that bias on the Internet itself, including obscene and biased language in online forums and comments sections, is a barrier that prevents some people from sharing their views on controversial issues. For those who do confront bias online, researchers worry that a single instance of public activism may lead to “slacktivism” which could reduce the likelihood of sustained effort in fighting discrimination offline. The authors discuss how group membership and moral credentialing may interact to predict who is most susceptible to slacktivism. Finally, the power of online activism may be limited if the desire to appear egalitarian to one’s peers leads to a discrepancy between online and offline selves. Framing efforts on the Internet as an important first step in more sustained action may maximize the utility of this new avenue for confrontation.

**Future directions**

People may face bias against any stigmatized social identity (Major & O’Brien, 2005). However, most psychological research focuses on how people perceive and respond to racism and sexism, with occasional attention to bias based on sexual orientation, size, and religion. This may be due, in part, to the fact that racism and sexism have the most contentious histories in the home countries of prejudice researchers. Discrimination based on these two social categories has produced horrific behavior including genocide, slavery, and systematic oppression of people from disadvantaged groups. Emerging social movements or broader social concern for other forms of bias may motivate researchers to consider confrontations beyond racism and sexism. In addition, as Jessica D. Remedios and Muna Akhtar (Chapter 9: Intersectional approaches to the study of confronting prejudice) remind us, not all forms of bias are perceived and responded to in the same manner; indeed, researchers should give greater consideration to the manner in which multiple, intersecting identities shape confrontations.

Very little research has addressed how social class and chronic power may affect one’s response to discrimination. Leslie Ashburn-Nardo and M. Fazuan Abdul Karim (Chapter 2) identify research in the workplace context that shows how power shapes the likelihood of confrontation. It is difficult to psychologically manipulate power in a lab context the way it may appear in the real world. That is, temporarily making people feel powerful may not have the same influence on their willingness to confront as having chronic power. Serena Williams famously confronted what she perceived to be sexism from the umpire in the 2018 championship match at the
U.S. Open (Luther, 2018). Williams assertively called out the umpire for penalizing her for behaviors that men players routinely display without penalty. Although she is dually stigmatized as a Black woman, Williams may have engaged in this public confrontation because she has high status in the sport and is wealthy. Experiencing chronic power could increase self-efficacy as well as make it more likely that a person sees the benefits of confrontation as outweighing the risks.

Researchers may also wish to explore this question in the context of recruiting allies with chronic racial or gender power to confront. Allies may be willing to harness their chronic social power if they can be convinced that the benefits outweigh the risks of confronting on behalf of others.

One theme that emerges in the volume is that what people imagine doing in response to perceived discrimination frequently does not match what they actually do in the situation (Kawakami et al., Chapter 1). Only a handful of studies have examined actual responses to witnessing or experiencing biased behavior or what happens when someone is confronted for biased behavior. Conducting high impact laboratory research to capture actual response during this type of exchange is challenging. Many of these single experiments required hundreds of hours of work in the lab and a similar amount of time coding behavior to shed light on actual responses during bias-relevant situations (e.g., Mallett & Wagner, 2011). However, investing the time and resources to conduct resource-intensive work that examines dynamic behavior is essential if we wish to fully understand this phenomenon.

Researchers may also wish to explore possible connections between individual confrontation and social change. Several chapters expand the definition of confrontation to include reporting biased behavior to a third party and using social media to express one’s discontent with a social issue (e.g., #Blacklivesmatter) or to challenge public figures (e.g., politicians) (Julia C. Becker and Manuela Barreto, Chapter 7; Eric M. Gomez and Cheryl R. Kaiser, Chapter 15; Robyn K. Mallett and Kala J. Melchiori, Chapter 5). Publicly confronting biased behavior labels the behavior as inappropriate and reminds people that they should adhere to egalitarian norms. When a group of individuals publicly challenge biased behavior, such as the #BlackLivesMatter and #MeToo movements, they raise awareness of the issue and show that single incidents of bias form a pattern of pervasive discrimination. Revealing bias at the aggregate level may motivate both ingroup members and outgroup allies to challenge the bias. In this way, individual behavior may inspire collective action such that individuals advocate on behalf of a social group rather than (or in addition to) standing up for themselves personally.

Finally, to continue to move research on confrontation forward we need a comprehensive theory to predict when people confront versus ignore discrimination. Many factors likely affect one’s decision to confront, as noted in the first section of this volume. The CPR model (Ashburn-Nardo, Morris, & Goodwin, 2008) has made significant headway in providing an organizational framework for understanding the process of confrontation. Yet the area would benefit from a broader theoretical model that considers how construals of the discriminatory event affect one’s motivation to respond to discrimination. Such a theory should also take into account the various goals and mindsets that affect the decisions to act that potential
confronters make in the moment, as noted it the second section of this volume. Importantly, these decisions should be linked to the intrapersonal and interpersonal outcomes for both the confronter and the confrontee. The creation of such a model would help integrate what has become a productive literature examining the phenomenon of confrontation.

**Conclusion**

Calling attention to bias signals that the behavior is unacceptable, reinforces egalitarian norms, and may reduce discriminatory attitudes and behaviors. In comparison, ignoring bias conveys tacit approval and may reinforce prejudice and encourage future discrimination. This volume summarizes what psychological research reveals about the factors that motivate people like Ashley Judd to publicly accuse powerful men like Harvey Weinstein of sexual harassment, despite the backlash that was likely to follow. It highlights the promise and pitfalls of confronting bias as individuals and in coalition with social groups in contexts including education and health care. The chapters also note where future research is most needed to address the gaps in our knowledge of this phenomenon. Each chapter concludes by offering practical applications for how we may use research to reduce prejudice and discrimination. Given the fact that bias persists in blatant and subtle forms, the necessity of determining how to call attention to and reduce that bias remains a pressing concern.

**References**


